

Beard (G. M.)

# THE COSMIC LAW OF INTEMPERANCE.

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF THE TEMPERANCE  
QUESTION.

By GEORGE M. BEARD, A. M. M. D., and Fellow of the New York Academy of Medicine.

The subject of the climatology of intemperance is a department of science that has been pretty generally ignored. Amid all the discussions to which the temperance agitation has given rise very few have thought it necessary to study in elaborate fullness the effects of race and climate on the intemperate habit. Nearly all that has been spoken or written on this subject has been fragmentary, and incidental, founded on a narrow range of facts. Quite recently Dr. Bowditch of Boston has drawn certain conclusions concerning the relation of climate and race to intemperance and the relation of intemperance to the different kinds of alcoholic liquors employed, derived from a correspondence on the subject with the representatives of the United States government in different parts of the globe.

This report of Dr. Bowditch is one of very few attempts that have been made to solve the complex problem of intemperance by *scientific methods*; amid a dreary waste of thought and word and deed that the past half century has given to the theme it is one of perhaps but three or four oases.

It is because of the great value of this report and the vast importance of the subject, that I desire to point out what seems to be erro-

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\*Second and third annual reports of the State Board of Health of Massachusetts, 1871 and 1872.

neous in the cosmic law as stated by Dr. Bowditch and in some other inferences contained in the report of which I have spoken.

1. The data from which Dr. Bowditch derives his cosmic law, though original and very valuable as adjuncts to facts obtained from other sources, are of themselves incomplete and unsatisfactory, and are insufficient to establish a cosmic law.

The letters of enquiry on the subject of alcoholic liquors were directed mostly to those stations where our government is represented, and to individuals many of whom had neither the opportunity nor the capacity to give any just and reliable information on the subject. Even if every representative of our government and the non-officials to whom the circulars were sent had given a full and satisfactory reply, the information thus obtained would have been by no means sufficient to establish a general law, but as a matter of fact replies came only from forty-nine different places, *i. e.*, from a little more than one-fourth of those to whom the circular was sent, which, with three from this country made fifty-two different "observation stations" so to speak. This number Dr. Bowditch concedes "is too small to lay down perfectly positive laws in regard to the topics suggested."\* Concerning the quality of these replies it may be remarked that while some of them are surprisingly full, and others are exceedingly suggestive, others still are almost if not absolutely valueless. To obtain accurate information concerning the drinking customs of all ranks of society, even in a country where we reside, is a matter of great difficulty, and not one man in ten thousand is qualified to conduct such an investigation. Consider for a moment the diametrically opposite opinions that are daily expressed concerning intemperance in our own land. I hold that the man who declares that intemperance is at all frequent among the ladies of America is a slanderer of his nation; in what we call good society female sots are exceedingly rare; and yet pulpits and papers continually proclaim the opposite opinion. At the present time very few of our college graduates fall into permanent habits of gross drinking, but colleges are persistently stigmatized as nurseries of intemperance, and every year young men of talent are sent into commerce and trade because their parents dare not allow them to go to a university. Several times a day I go through portions of Broadway and Fifth Avenue, but rarely do I see there an intoxicated person of either sex, and yet there is no question that New York is one of the most intemperate cities in the world, and every year witnesses the arrest of thirty odd thousand for drunkenness and disorderly conduct. In any attempt to trace the

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\*Third Annual Report of the State Board of Health of Massachusetts, 1872, p. 73.



relation between intemperance and disease and crime, we encounter difficulties that baffle the largest wisdom and the most practised skill.

If, in our native land, amid life-long associations, we find expressed opinions concerning the abuse of alcoholic liquors and the effects of such abuse so widely divergent, what reliance shall we place on the opinions of a single individual who has resided at most but a few years among the people, concerning whose customs he is expected to be informed; whose social and official position precludes him from the opportunity of learning the habits of the great masses, and who, very likely in all his life, has never studied any subject by scientific methods, and who, perchance, is organically incapable of scientific thinking. Professed politicians are of all classes the most unscientific, and very few of our literati have received sufficient scientific training to enable them to pursue with calmness and precision any vast and complex social problem. Very few have the candor of Mr. Bancroft, who writes to Dr. Bowditch that he has "no opportunity of observing the people in their places of indulgence and cannot offer an opinion of my own on the relative amount of intoxication in this country." But some, who probably know as little as he, are ready with absolute and final statements on the subject. I speak from laborious personal experience when I say that to obtain truthful answers to the questions contained in the circular of the State Board of Health, even when one is on the ground, and aided by all necessary official influence, is a matter of excessive difficulty, and is in some cases utterly impossible. The moral of these remarks is that we must not depend on the statements of any one or two individuals in regard to the subject under discussion, but should seek out every possible source of information and diligently compare them before we form our conclusions.

Information of great value on this subject is found in *works of travel*. They are not complete: they are not all trustworthy; travelers are men of like passions with ourselves, and are, therefore, liable to all the errors that arise from ignorance, and prejudice and superstition. Many travelers, however, have been endowed with scientific minds, scientifically trained, and practised by long years of residence among strange people, living under strange climates and speaking strange languages. The art of observation, like every other art, is only perfected by practice: to see and to know what we see, to hear and to know what we hear, to feel and to know what we feel, and to accurately record the sights and sounds and sensations we experience is an art that can no more be extemporized or stumbled upon than can the art of executing an elegant painting, or composing in a strong and eloquent style.

Travelers have the advantage that they live and move among the masses, and hence have an opportunity to observe the actual customs of the people whom they visit. They have the advantage, also, that observation is with them a business, a speciality; with government officials it is an incidental matter, and in so far as they fail in that, in so far do they fail in the object of their travel. In the study of the subject of intemperance, works of travel have the further advantage that many of them were written before the era of the temperance agitation, before prohibition or tetotalism were thought of, while yet all people in all parts of the globe were using stimulants and narcotics just as they used ordinary food, without fear or moral questioning; consequently they have on this theme no prejudices to gratify and no theories to establish; they testify simply of things as they are seen and allow the reader to make the inferences.

In my own researches on this subject, I have studied pretty exhaustively the works of the best known travelers, in Africa, Asia, South America, the Pacific Islands, and all lands that are far removed from civilization, and have compared the various and conflicting accounts which they give of the eating and drinking customs of the world, with what is known on the subject through observation and general literature. In these researches the letters received in reply to the circular of the State Board of Health have been very carefully considered; and not a little assistance has been derived from conversation and correspondence with those who have visited and resided in distant lands.

The conclusions to which I have arrived may not be wholly true, but they are based on a very broad range of facts, and are, perhaps, the nearest approximation to the truth on this subject that is possible in the present state of hygienic science.

2. The Cosmic Law of Intemperance as stated by Dr. Bowditch, is but partially true. In the Annual Report for 1872, the law is thus given: "Intemperance prevails the world over, but it is very rare at the equator. The tendency increases according to latitude, becoming more frequent and more brutal and disastrous in its effects on man and society as we approach the northern regions."

There is in fact not a little intemperance in the tropics. The isothermal lines of 77° F. mean annual temperature, north and south of the equator, between which, according to Dr. Bowditch, intemperance is rare, enclose vast armies of drunkards. Between these lines, under the burning heat of the tropics, may be found exhibitions of drunkenness that in beastliness and brutality rival the ugliest streets of Liverpool or Dublin of New York or San Francisco.



The East African, according to Burton, "drinks till he can no longer stand, lies down to sleep, and awakens to drink again. \* \* The highest orders rejoice in drink and pride themselves upon powers of imbibing. If a Muyamwezi be asked after eating, whether he is hungry, he will reply "yes," meaning *that he is not drunk.*"

At Angola funerals are attended with intemperance of the grossest form, just as was formerly the custom in Scotland. Reprove an African for being drunk on such an occasion, and he will promptly reply "Why, my mother is dead;" no other excuse being needed. There are tribes in Africa who spend nearly their whole lives in a state of intoxication, and very many of whose members are disfigured by wounds received in drunken brawls. It would seem that in comparison with some of these Central Africans the Northerner *has yet to learn the alphabet of drinking.*

In India—one of the hottest of countries—intemperance of a gross form has existed for ages, and especially in Bengal, its effects on the native population have been so disastrous as to arouse the earnest attention of philanthropists; and all the power of the religions of that land does not avail to cure the evil.

The *natives* of the West Indies and of Central South America are sometimes as beastial in their habits of drinking as the natives of Africa. By the Brazilians *nine* different liquors are made, "each possessing peculiar qualities." The natives of the hot regions of South America drink in crowds for days and weeks at a time, rolling on the ground in intoxication, or flagellating themselves with thongs.

The tropical islands of the Pacific are inhabited by savages who in frequency and brutality of drunkenness are, to say the least, the peers of the negroes of Africa and Brazil, or even the peasantry of Scotland and Ireland, of Sweden and Norway.

Ellis in his *Researches in Polynesia*, where he was several years a missionary, gives us pictures of the drinking customs of those islands that make Liverpool or New York white in comparison. The Sandwich Islands, before the arrival of the missionaries, were as conspicuous for their excess in drinking their native liquors as for their degradation in all other respects. In short, the hot places of the earth everywhere are filled with the habitations of drunkenness.

The apparent exceptions are those localities, where, as in portions of South America and West Indies, liquor is so scarce and dear that the classes most disposed to drink cannot obtain it, or where the population is largely composed of *colonists who belong to temperate races.*

It may, indeed, be questioned whether among the *natives* of tropical climes there is not more of continuous revolting excess in drink-

ing in proportion to the population than in the cold regions of the North. The Spaniards, Portuguese and French, are everywhere temperate, and in South America and the West Indies they carry with them and bequeath to their descendants—even to those of mixed blood—the temperate habits of Spain, Portugal and France—but to judge the aborigines of those countries by the descendants of European colonists is obviously unfair.

One fact that my researches seem to establish is this, *that in warm or hot climates very much more liquor is needed to produce intoxication than in cold climates.* The difference is seen in our own country, for in the Southern cities there appears to be a much larger relative consumption of strong and weak alcoholic drinks than in the Northern cities, and with a *relatively* less amount of intoxication therefrom, as I judge from personal observation, and from the experience of a large number of travelers. The natives of Africa, of South America, and of the Pacific Islands all agree in making every distinctive event—death or birth, arrival and departure, a secular or religious festival—an excuse for drinking, and the amount consumed is stupendous.

Another fact of importance, is that the excess in the use of *alcohol in warm or hot climates does not cause nervous diseases to the same extent as in the cold climates of civilization.* Delirium tremens and insanity and chronic alcoholism are comparatively rare among the natives of hot climates, even when alcoholic drinking is carried to enormous excess; under and near the equator the punishment of long continued drunkenness is disease of the liver, which does not manifest itself as readily to the superficial observer as delirium tremens and some other diseases of the nervous system. These facts taken together may partly explain the great errors contained in the replies of the correspondents of the State Board of Health.\*

The Cosmic Law of Intemperance to which my researches seem to point may be thus stated: *Intemperance has existed in all recorded ages, and in all parts of the globe where alcoholic liquors of any kind are attainable. It is most common and most disastrous in its effects in the colder regions of the Northern Hemisphere, and especially in those climates that are made disagreeable and trying by extremes of heat and cold. It is, on the whole, for various reasons, less common in the Trop-*

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\* For sources of information on the subject above discussed, I may refer to my works on "*Eating and Drinking*," and "*Stimulants and Narcotics*," in both of which the titles and authors of about one hundred books of reference may be found. I may here specify as worthy of special study the writings of Burton, Speke, Ellis, Baker, Livingstone and Reed, Humboldt, Astley's Collection of Truths, *Morewood's History of Inebriating Liquors*, and a very excellent essay on *Comparative Morality in Essays of a Birmingham Manufacturer*, by Sargent, vol. iii., pp. 195-296, London, 1871.



*ics, and is most rare and least disastrous in its effects in the southern portions of the North Temperate Zone, where the climate is uniformly mild and agreeable.*

The prevalence and the injuriousness of the vice of intemperance depend not only on climate, but on race, on the population, and on the quality and cheapness of the alcoholic liquors. It would be a very great error to infer that the distribution of intemperance as expressed by the above law was the result of *climate* alone. The South Temperate Zone I exclude from consideration, for the reason that it is so limited in extent and population. South America is probably the most temperate of all the continents, while the palm of intemperance is borne by Europe. The most temperate region of the globe—the *temperate belt*, as I term it—includes Spain, Italy, Southern France, Turkey, Syria, Persia, North Africa, and Southern China. In these regions there is crime enough of every kind—murder, brigandage, licentiousness of the greatest extreme, and any amount of ignorance and degradation—but there is comparatively very little of intemperance.

It is probable that if the present inhabitants of the tropical regions of Africa, Asia, South America and the Pacific Islands were turned loose among the same variety of alcoholic liquors that on every hand tempt the inhabitants of Northern Europe and America, this cosmic law, as I have stated it, would not be correct, for the tropics would certainly take the lead in intemperance, at least in proportion to the population; for there can be no question that an extremely high temperature invites and favors excessive consumption of alcohol. It does this in several ways. *First*, it increases thirst, and alcoholic liquors are most agreeable temporary assuagers of thirst. *Secondly*, it induces a condition of languor and debility, which for the time, at least, is very successfully controlled by stimulants. *Thirdly*, by the profuse perspiration that it causes, and possibly for other reasons less understood, it makes it possible to consume large quantities of alcoholic liquors without experiencing any immediate ill effects therefrom.

In extremely cold climates, alcoholic liquors are not well borne, as all travelers will agree. When the climate is rendered trying by extreme heat, as in the tropics, or by extremes of heat and cold, as in Northern Europe and America, there is the strongest temptation to excess in the use of alcohol; when the climate is *really* temperate, uniformly agreeable, without intense extremes of heat or cold, there is the least temptation to excess in alcohol, and this fact, taken in connection with considerations of race—which is itself partly a result of climate—will explain in a measure the existence of the temperate belt of which I have spoken.

The notion that civilization favors intemperance by making severe drafts on the brain, which alcoholic stimulation counteracts, is not sustained by the researches I have made in this department. On the contrary, a number of considerations seem to show that, when climate and accessibility to alcoholic stimulants are the same, civilized man is far less intemperate than the uncivilized, and that the opposite idea has arisen from the fact that the majority of savages are less abundantly supplied with alcoholic liquors than the residents of civilized lands.

Savages, under whatever climate they are found, almost invariably plunge into excesses of intoxication whenever the materials are obtainable. Amid the icebergs of Siberia and Kamtschatka, as well as in the jungles of India, or on the deserts of Africa, travelers find it necessary to look out sharply lest the natives get access to their stores of alcoholic liquors.

Another fact, pointing the same way, and one to which I have already referred, and the significance of which cannot well be overestimated, is that *the leading and truly cultured classes of all civilized lands, everywhere, are on the average temperate*. The habitual intemperance of Europe and America is mainly confined to the ignorant and degraded classes—those who have made the least advance beyond the savagery of our ancestors.

3. Dr. Bowditch gives a greater relative prominence to climate as a cause of intemperance than a wide survey of the facts that bear on the subject will justify.

Granting, that in *the long lapse of ages* climate is the leading factor that determines the differences of race, yet in appreciable, historic time—certainly for a number of generations—*race* everywhere is more potent than climate. The Anglo-Saxons are a race of drunkards—made so partly by the stock from which they sprung, and partly by long residence in climates that excite intemperance; and wherever they go, from the equator to the poles, equally in the South Temperate and the North Temperate Zones, at sea and on shore, in lands where the vine grows, and in lands where nothing will grow, they carry with them habits of beastly intoxication; and generations of residence in Australia, or South America, or in any of the countries lying within the belt of the globe where intemperance is most rare, have not availed to cure these habits. On the other hand, the temperate peoples of the earth—the Spaniards, the Italians, the Turks, the Syrians, and the Germans—do not acquire, even after a long residence, the grossly intemperate customs of the English, Scotch, Irish, and Americans.



We have seen that the comparative temperance of the leading classes of North America and the West Indies is due to the fact that they were settled by French and Spaniards. The Hebrews, starting from a land where intemperance has never been a dominant vice, have gone all over the globe, have mingled with the most besotted nations, and under the most unfavorable climates, and everywhere they have carried with them and kept with them their habits of sobriety. Rarely do we see a case of delirium tremens, or of chronic alcoholism, among the Jews, in any climate. Just how much the climate of Italy has changed during the past 2500 years, no one can fully learn, but it is certain that the ancient Romans were far more intemperate than the modern Italians. If the United States had been settled by the French, Spaniards and Italians, instead of the English, it is probable that intoxication would be a rare evil here, and the temperance reform might never have been heard of.

4. Dr. Bowditch places greater reliance on the cultivation of the vine and the cheapening of pure wines and mild beers, as an aid to the temperance cause, than he would have done if he had based his generalizations on a broader range of facts.

Even the facts contained in his own reports will not allow us to hope for any very radical improvement in the drinking customs of our country, by the popularization of vine growing, or the multiplication of beer gardens.

It so happens, by the law of correlation, that *the vine grows abundantly in those climates that are peopled by temperate races*, but it no more follows that the generous diffusion of the wines of Spain and Italy will cure our drunkards than that an abundance of macaroni will cure our gluttons.

The bold, adventure-loving, energetic and laborious Anglo-Saxon will not be content with mild liquors, even though they are as abundant and as cheap as the rain of heaven. To this must be added the consideration that in our climate wine is, in individual cases, the silken cord that conducts to the stronger liquors, in which we are bound fast and strong. Preëminently, France is the land of the vine, and it is fast becoming a drunken nation, though peopled by a comparatively temperate race. The comparative cheapness of wine has not saved Switzerland, nor did it save Ancient Rome, from the horrors of drunkenness. Similarly, also, an abundance of mild fermented liquors will not save a people whom race and climate invite to intoxication. The pombe or plantain wine of Africa, the various drinks of South America and the Pacific Islands, minister to a type of intemperance that is as common as it is revolting.

Ancient history throughout refutes the popular notion that wines are to solve the temperance problem for the moderns. The art of distillation is of recent discovery, but intemperance is coeval with historic man. The climates of Persia and Babylonia, and ancient Italy, were not such as foster intemperance, but in all these lands there was intoxication, and abundance of it, and it was fed by pure and simple wines.\*

The Italians, the Spaniards, may colonize lands where wine is scarce and dear, but they are temperate still; the Saxon may take up his residence by the dome of a vineyard, and he can no more leave behind him his habits of excessive drinking than he can leave his blue eyes or his love of adventure.

The illustration sometimes brought from California is utterly valueless. California was settled by very much the same class as flocked to King David in the case of Adullam, or rallied to the conspiracy of Cataline—the class who in every land furnish the recruits for the armies of the intemperate; with the advance of culture in California, with the introduction of woman and education, and a better quality of emigrants, there has been an inevitable increase of sobriety. As a matter of fact, however, the native wines are not remarkably popular in California, and certainly do not exclude, if indeed they at all restrict, the use of stronger liquors.

Whether a nation is to be temperate or intemperate depends on the following conditions, which I name in the order of their relative importance:

1. Race.
2. Climate.
3. Social position, (including religion, education and government, and financial status).
4. Kind of liquor employed.

*Given these factors—bold, energetic races, trying and disagreeable climate, gross ignorance and poverty, and adulterated distilled liquors—and we have intemperance. Given, timid and indolent races, mild and equable climates, high intelligence and education, and wealth, and pure native wines, or mild fermented liquors, and we have temperance.*

With all the exceptions that may be brought, these laws hold true as generally and as logically as any laws of cause and effect that are known to science.

Of these factors, only the 3d and 4th are at all under human control. The diffusion of knowledge, and of physical comforts, wise

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\* On this subject see Rawlinson's Five Great Monarchies.



legislation and the encouragement of the use of wine and beer in preference to stronger liquors, are all, to a limited degree, within the range of the human will, and all are of value ; but the latter is, I believe, the least important.

The means for diminishing intemperance which are at all under human control, are the following, which I present in the order of their relative importance :

1. *Education, literary, technical, scientific, moral and religious.*
2. *Diffusion of material comforts.*
3. *Popularization of pure wines and mild beers.*
4. *Restriction of the sale of strong and adulterated liquors.*

Of these four methods of attacking the evil of intemperance—through universal education, through diffusion of material comforts, through popularization of pure wines and mild beers, and through restriction of the sale of strong and adulterated liquors—the *first* mentioned is not only more important than all the others, but is really worth more than all the others combined ; it is the method that demands first and chief consideration, even to the neglect of all the rest. The second method—through the diffusion of material comforts—is closely related to the first, and indeed becomes a part of it ; while the third and fourth methods are of but little avail unless preceded and reinforced by the first and second. The shortsightedness of politicians, statesmen and philanthropists, is shown by the fact that during most of the agitation on this subject attention has been mainly directed to the *last and least* important of these four methods. Completely foiled in all their experiments in this direction, temperance men split into two hostile factions—one putting their faith in absolute prohibitory legislation ; the other in the popularization of pure native wines and mild beers, and both agreeing on one point only : that is, to ignore entirely the one method which is worth infinitely more than both of them combined.

The second method—universal diffusion of material comforts—involves the whole complex subject of labor reform, which I have here no time to discuss. It is sufficient to state that, the other conditions being the same, those classes are most intemperate who are deprived of the most comforts.

The one great practical lesson to be learned from the scientific study of intemperance, is that the future of the temperance reform must rest mainly on *education*, in the broad sense of the term, and in the self control that is generated by intellectual training, and in the incitement to virtue and dissuasion from coarse vices that come from a moderate supply of physical needs and from agreeable social surround-

ings. As long as we have among us, in this climate, and of these drunken races, a large and increasing class of wretchedly poor, wretchedly ignorant, and universally despised and oppressed citizens, without good food, or comfortable clothing, or decent homes, and without any social position or aspiration—a class separated by a gulf as wide as all the oceans from those who have either money or culture—so long shall we have intemperance. Legislation may do something, and perhaps has done something already, but the temperance question *is a part of the great social problem—is interwoven with it, and must be solved in connection with it.*

At the present time, although the habit of drinking is almost universal, yet intemperance among the *liberally educated classes* is comparatively infrequent, and among the ladies of the higher orders, liberally educated or half educated, it is, as I have stated, excessively rare. Every year thousands of receptions are held in New York, where liquors of all kinds, from champagne to claret, are as abundant as water, and where all or nearly all the guests partake without showing any evidence of intoxication. If a crowd of savage Africans or Hindoos, or South American Indians, were thus set free among wine bottles, nearly all would be either jolly or dead drunk before they left, and very likely the reception would end with a free fight all around. Our ancestors in Great Britain and in this country, only fifty years ago found it impossible to celebrate a wedding, or a funeral, or a church raising, without becoming the worse for drink, and yet it took much more alcohol to produce intoxication in them than in their descendants. Why all this difference? Can we account for it in any other way than by the fact of the higher culture and wider diffusion of liberal education, and general increase of refinement in the present generation? If the temperance agitation alone explained this progress why is it not found among the poor and ignorant, who at the present day sign more pledges than the wealthy and cultivated? It is social rather than moral principle, fashion more than conscience, the instincts of culture and good breeding, that explain the usual moderation of the leading orders of American society. In France, during the last quarter of a century, ignorance has increased, and intemperance has increased also, and pretty nearly in the same ratio.

I am inclined to believe that the temperance of Germany is more the result of a system of compulsory education that makes gross ignorance impossible, than of the lager beer and Rhine wine, for the ancient Germans were gluttons and drunkards.

The one great error of temperance reformers has been to suppose that any single virtue could be artificially cultivated and developed far



in advance of all other allied and correlated virtues. It is a fundamental law of sociology, that virtues must be evolved together, in harmony with each other, so that each may receive the support of all the rest. All the special virtues must spring from some common, fundamental virtue which has itself been developed from a virtuous principle still more fundamental, just as many twigs may spring from a single shoot that is one of many divisions of the main branch of a tree. It is no more possible for a nation that race and climate predisposes to intemperance to become suddenly temperate, than it is for a tree to bear fruit without trunk or branches, or for a flower to bloom before the seed has sprouted.

In the coming golden age, when passion everywhere shall be subjected to reason, and selfishness shall be transformed into benevolence, and the vast irregularities of life shall be brought to a dead level; when there shall be no hewers of wood and drawers of water, but when high education and material comforts shall be universal, and all the joys and burdens of humanity shall be impartially distributed—in such a perfect social state there will be perfect sobriety; and in proportion as we approach that state, in proportion to our success in diminishing the general ignorance and wretchedness, and increasing the general knowledge and comfort among the intemperate races, in that proportion shall we approach a state where intemperance shall be unknown. Conversely, it is established by recent experience that no amount of special temperance agitation, or of special temperance legislation, will long or permanently avail to diminish intemperance among the lower orders.

There has never been a period in the history of civilization when intemperance among the depressed and dangerous classes of Europe and America was more prevalent or disastrous in its effects than it is to-day, although among the *liberally educated* classes of the same countries the evil has now been reduced to a minimum. In connection with this fact, and as serving to explain it, it has been shown by statistics, and by general observation, that the condition of the working and dangerous classes of Great Britain has not improved during the past one hundred years; that it has, on the whole, retrograded; that while the privileged orders have steadily advanced in wealth, in culture and refinement, the poorer classes have either remained stationary in their poverty, or have been gradually sinking into deeper depths of wretchedness and degradation; the mist which once enveloped *all* ranks of society has rolled off from the favored upon the unfavored classes, so that the latter are in deeper darkness than before. Not only are the rich growing richer and the poor growing poorer, but the wise are be-

coming wiser and the ignorant more ignorant still, as our complex civilization goes on. As in the first clearing away of a storm the clouds collect on the borders of the distant horizon thicker and darker than when the storm was at its height, so in certain stages of human progress, ignorance and despair seem to be lifted from one portion of society only to settle and concentrate on the other. Thus it happens that while Europe and America have been presumably advancing in wisdom and culture, while the temperance reform, under the guidance of men, who, though usually narrow and ignorant, and oftentimes unscrupulous, have been terribly in earnest, has, in connection with this general advance in refinement, by the aid of the increasing nervous susceptibility of modern brain-workers, that renders it impossible for them to use alcohol in the manner of our ancestors, thoroughly leavened the higher classes, it has but little affected the working man, the pauper, the criminal, or the slave.

Another error of temperance agitators has been to suppose that to abolish alcohol would be to abolish intemperance. Alcohol is only one of the very many varieties of stimulants and narcotics, and excess in the use of it is by no means so disastrous as excess in the use of some of the others. Now, the habit of using stimulants and narcotics of some kind or other began with human history; it antedates by thousands of years the discovery of distillation, or even of wine itself. Nations that by climate or soil are deprived of one form, resort to some other, and by simple or complex manufacture, or by importations, they will obtain it. If by virtue of legislation they are debarred from any one variety, they atone for the deprivation by greater excess in the use of the others. Long ago I observed that total abstinence advocates were very free users of tobacco, especially in the form of chewing, and the enormous and alarming increase in the habit of opium-eating in this country during the last thirty years, is largely the result of moral and legislative agitation on the subject of temperance; and yet this moral agitation has only affected a certain portion of society, and prohibitory legislation is almost a failure. If, now, we could conceive of a state of society in which, in our climate and with our present organization and appetites, the habit of total abstinence from alcoholic liquors should be universal, or if a prohibitory law should be really enforced, we should expect to find a great increase in the amount of opium imported. A greater evil than the general extension of the opium-eating habits of the Eastern nations to this country could not be imagined, a more destructive calamity could not be prayed for by the bitterest enemy of republican institutions. With our race and climate, with our inherited and acquired nervousness, it would destroy



the national life, physical, intellectual and moral, and might alone reduce us to a lower grade than the people of Asia.

If some despot, armed with absolute power, could carry out the wishes of certain of the temperance reformers, and entirely prohibit the manufacture, the importation and the sale of any form of alcoholic liquors in Europe and America, then opium would take the place of alcohol, and men would pray for the repeal of the arbitrary law as the only hope of civilization. For mighty as are the evils of intemperance in the use of alcoholic liquors, vast as is the destruction that it causes in the increase of pauperism and crime\* and disease, the evils of excess in the use of opium, though less noisy and conspicuous, are yet very far greater.

If the power of this despot could be further extended, so that he might prohibit opium as well as alcohol, and if tea, and coffee, and tobacco were also included under the anathema, men would be driven to ether and chloroform, to Indian hemp and chloral, to satisfy the universal, imperious and God-implanted desire for stimulants.

The general use of ether, or chloroform, or Indian hemp would be worse for society than the use of alcoholic liquors. Of all the stronger stimulants and narcotics, *wines and fermented liquors are the least injurious*, and any legislation that tends to discourage their manufacture and importation is so far pernicious to society.

If not content with previous failures, this despot should prohibit *all* substances that are now known to possess narcotizing or stimulating properties, then the scientific genius and resources of the nineteenth century would immediately supply the deficiency, and out of the chemical laboratories new combinations would fly† like the young birds in the early summer, and from the depths of the forest, and from the most distant lands, men would bring to light stimulants and narcotics of infinite and unknown variety, to terrify and destroy the race. Some of

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\* I may remark here, that most of the widely-quoted circulated statistics, showing the relation of pauperism and crime to intemperance, are utterly unworthy of credence; they are obtained usually from untrustworthy sources, and are gathered and commented on by reckless and ignorant declaimers who are absolutely incapable of scientifically investigating any subject whatever. While it is undeniable that pauperism, disease and crime are originated and aggravated by intemperance, it is also true that a large proportion of drunkards and criminals are criminally disposed, whether *drunk or sober*. If we could annihilate alcohol, crime, and pauperism, and ignorance, the mother of lust, would, notwithstanding be sufficiently prevalent among us. Intemperance is the *concomitant* even more than the exciting *cause* of poverty and crime. Criminals in penitentiaries are very fond of telling visitors that rum brought them there, and statistics thus obtained from ignorant, low-lived, oftentimes half-idiotic men, who could not, if they would, ascertain the real truth on so complex a subject as the philosophy of their own guilt, and who would not tell the truth if they knew it, are repeatedly quoted as authority on this great question.

† Even during the past five years a number of new and important stimulants and narcotics have been brought to the attention of the public.

the substances thus discovered would probably be more injurious than those now in use, and the universal prohibition would not only fail of its purpose, but would leave the world worse than it found it. It has been said that absolute prohibition would be a good thing if it could be enforced. I have shown that in proportion as prohibitory laws are enforced, in that proportion do they fail of their purpose. It is fortunate for the human race that they cannot be enforced, excepting in restrictive localities or among those people who have no desire to drink.

The most powerful ally of the temperance cause in recent times, in this country, has been the increasing *nervous susceptibility of our brain-working classes, that compels them to abstain not only from ardent spirits, but also from tobacco, from tea, and, in our Northern States, from coffee.* In my own practice and observation among the intellectual classes, I find very many more who are injured by coffee and tobacco than by alcoholic liquors; in the lower ranks of society this rule does not hold good. This extreme nervousness of the intellectual Americans of both sexes, is the result partly of the dryness of our climate, and partly of our institutions.

In conclusion, I may say that those who love the Cause of Temperance, whatever differences of opinion there may be in regard to total abstinence, should concentrate their energies in the attempt to bring about a state of society in which it will be impossible for any child to grow up without a good education.

